

How to use this Wizard

The following document will assist you in understanding and navigating the interactive “Start a Business” wizard.



From the Start page you may start a new wizard session, continue an existing wizard, or download and view/print this [How to use this Wizard](#) document.

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1. Starting a Wizard

This wizard is a dynamic questionnaire that will ask you questions based upon your previous answers. You will be assigned a unique Wizard ID number. This number is required to resume your wizard at a later time.

The wizard does not include a number of licenses that are mentioned under the **NOT** included list.

Start a Business Wizard

Welcome to the initial release of the “Start a Business” wizard for prospective business owners in the District of Columbia! Based on your responses to questions, this wizard will produce a personalized checklist of the appropriate Basic Business Licenses and supporting documents required by the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) to start your business. Your personalized checklist provides details on each step of the process and lists them in the order they must be completed.

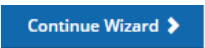


The wizard focuses on the Basic Business Licenses most frequently issued by DCRA. **NOT** included in this wizard are:

- Highly specialized Basic Business Licenses
- Special Events and Vending Licenses
- Licenses Issued by agencies other than DCRA (such as DOH, DDOT, or ABRA)
- Occupational and Professional Licenses (CPA, lawyer, doctor, plumber, etc.)
- Permits of any kind

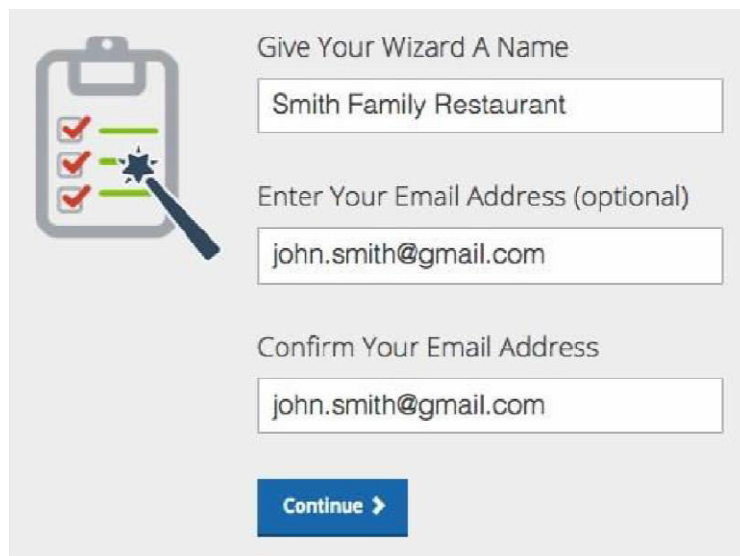
Our goal is to help aspiring entrepreneurs understand and comply with relevant DC Government business regulations. Please stay tuned for more - we will be featuring new releases and functionality in the coming weeks as we expand and enhance the DC Business Center to better serve you!

◀ Exit Wizard

Continue Wizard ▶

Click on  icon to begin the wizard,  click  icon to go back to the Home Page

To begin a new wizard, click the  icon on the Start page.

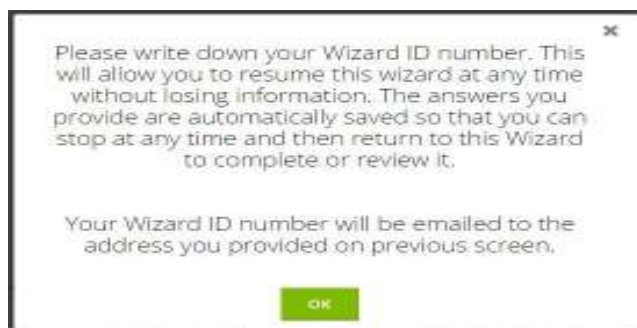


The form is titled 'Give Your Wizard A Name' and includes a clipboard icon with a checklist. It contains three input fields: 'Smith Family Restaurant' for the name, 'john.smith@gmail.com' for the email address, and 'john.smith@gmail.com' for the confirmation. A blue 'Continue >' button is at the bottom.


Give Your Wizard a Name – Enter a short name of the business you are starting. This field is optional.

Enter Your Email Address – Enter and confirm a valid email address where your wizard questions and answers or personalized checklist may be sent. This field is optional.

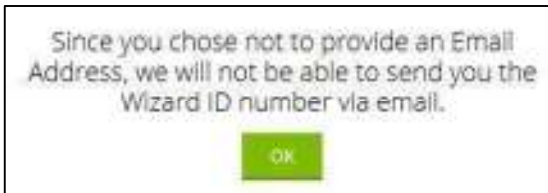
Click the  icon to advance to the next page. The following message will be displayed:



Write down the eight-digit Wizard ID number that appears on the page. This number uniquely identifies your wizard responses and the resulting personalized checklist. You may interrupt the entry of the wizard at any time. The wizard automatically saves your answers when you move from page to page so that you will not lose any information. When you return to the wizard to resume answering questions or to review your checklist, you must enter the Wizard ID number assigned.

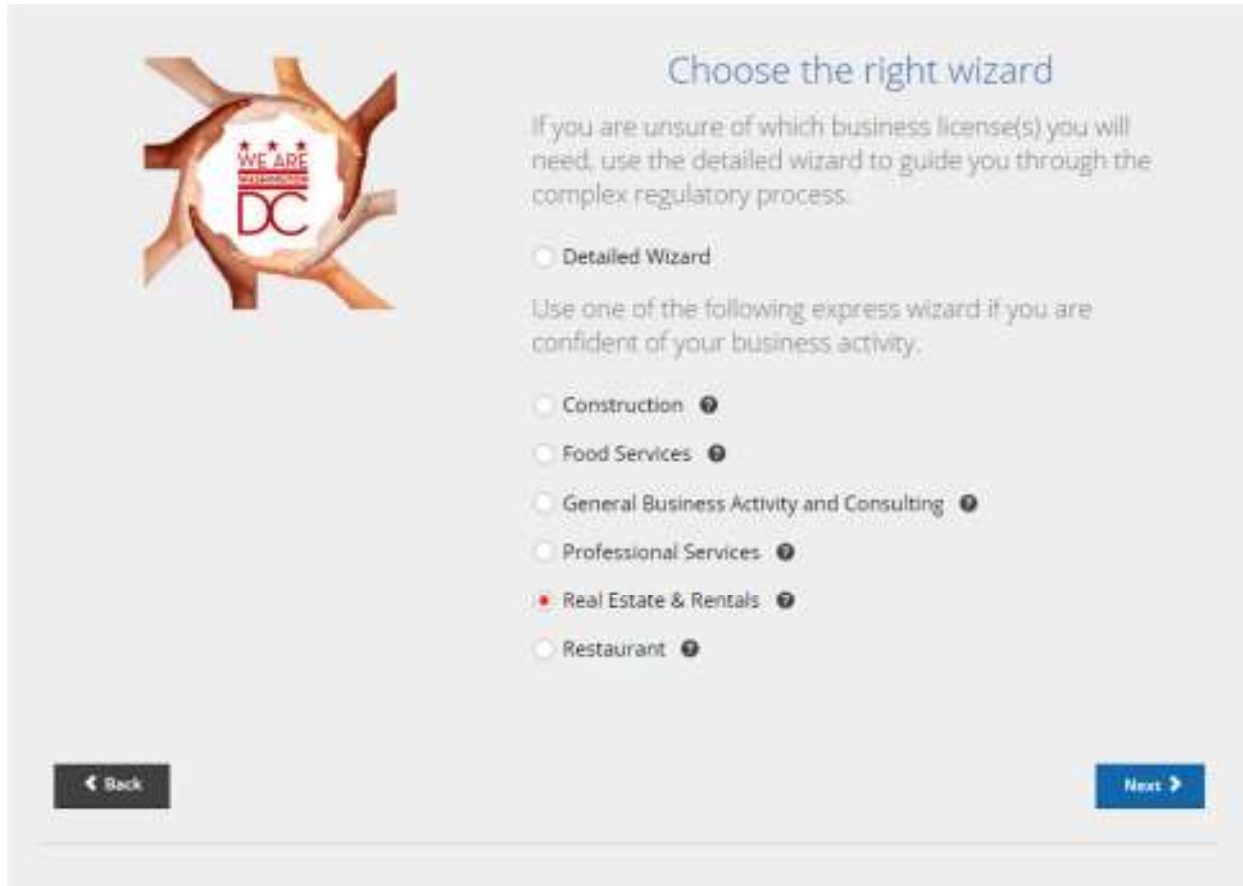
NOTE: Your wizard will stay in the system for 90 days before the information is removed. Select the  icon or click 'x' to continue.

NOTE: If you provide a valid email address, your Wizard ID number will also be emailed to you. If you choose not to provide an email address; the system will not be able to contact you. A modal will be shown as a warning message. Select “OK” to continue.



Steps for Express Wizard:

Select any of the 6 Express Wizards Icons from “business activity” section, for a faster and more streamlined result.



Choose Detailed Wizard to run the ‘Regular Wizard’ which helps the user to answer questions for each wizard step so as to derive a personalized checklist.

The Express Wizard essentially has 3 steps with questions displayed in “checkboxes” or “radio buttons” format in a list view enabling the user to reduce their wizard processing time to derive their personalized checklist much faster than a regular wizard.

Step 1: In this example, user will be presented with questions in radio button format when the user chooses to opt **Real Estate & Rentals** express Wizard.

Start a Business Wizard

Your Wizard ID: 33495060



The progress indicator shows in green which of the four (4) steps you are answering questions for. It may also be used for navigation. If you want to revisit a particular step, simply click on the appropriate step “ball”.

Next ➤

This button allows you to move to the next page. Each time you navigate from one page to another, your information is saved.

⬅ **Back**

This button allows you to return to the previous page.



Step 1: Business Activity

Tell us what business you will conduct in the District.

For this section you may need

For this section you will be asked to select the specific business activities you plan to conduct in DC.

⬅ **Back**

Next ➤

Choosing Real Estate & Rentals will take you to the following screen, where you can choose your business characteristics.

In which business activity will you engage? (Please select one):

- ☐ Are you going to operate a hotel? ⓘ
- ☒ Are you going to operate an inn or motel? ⓘ
- ☐ Are you going to provide short-term lodging (up to 9 guests and up to 3 guest bedrooms) in which breakfast is the only meal served? ⓘ
- ☐ Are you going to provide sleeping accommodations including meals to five or more people? ⓘ
- ☐ Are you going to provide sleeping accommodations to 3 or more people? ⓘ
- ☐ Are you going to rent out your home to accommodate not more than two families? ⓘ
- ☐ Are you going to rent out your house to accommodate not more than one family? ⓘ
- ☐ Are you going to rent/lease apartments? ⓘ

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Start a Business Wizard

You are now executing the **Real Estate & Rentals Express Wizard**.

Your Wizard ID: 34961208

[Review](#)

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

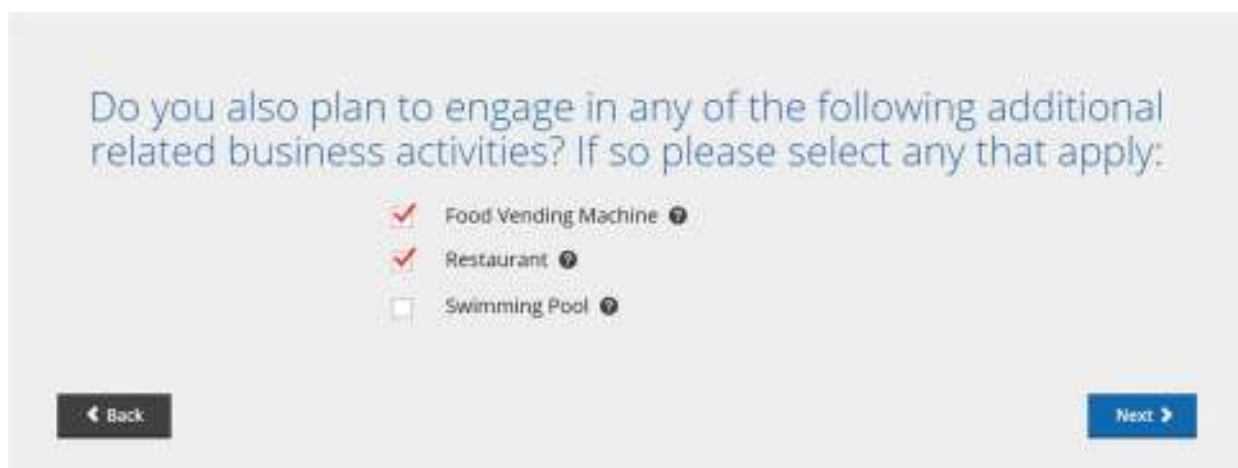
Business Activity

Physical Location

Corporate Structure

Results

Choose **Inn or Motel** & click **Next** to go to the next page of the wizard >> for the commonly associated license questions where checkboxes with multi-select feature is available.

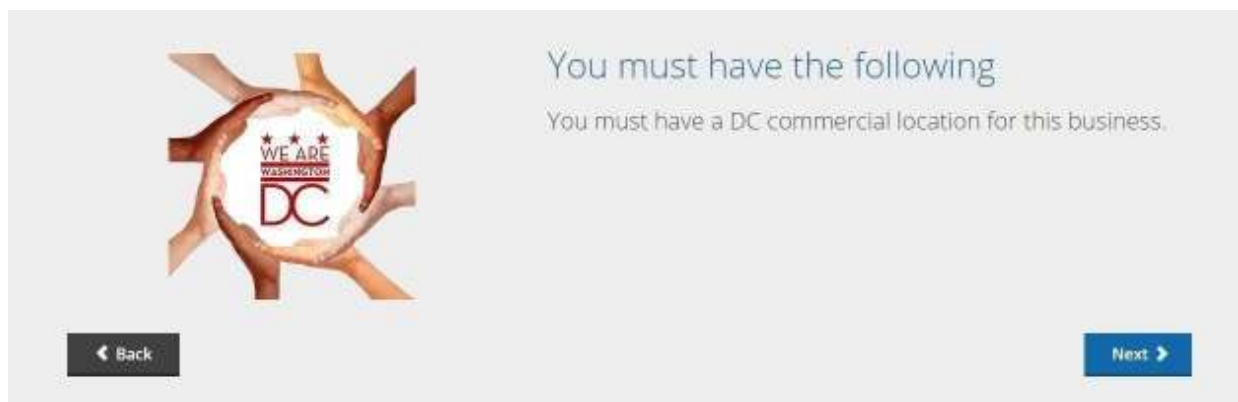



Do you also plan to engage in any of the following additional related business activities? If so please select any that apply:

- ☒ Food Vending Machine ⓘ
- ☒ Restaurant ⓘ
- ☐ Swimming Pool ⓘ

◀ Back Next ▶

Step 2: You will be presented with recommendation text “You must have a DC commercial location for this business” for Physical Location based on the BBLs (Basic Business License) detected by the system to be included in your personalized checklist.





You must have the following

You must have a DC commercial location for this business.

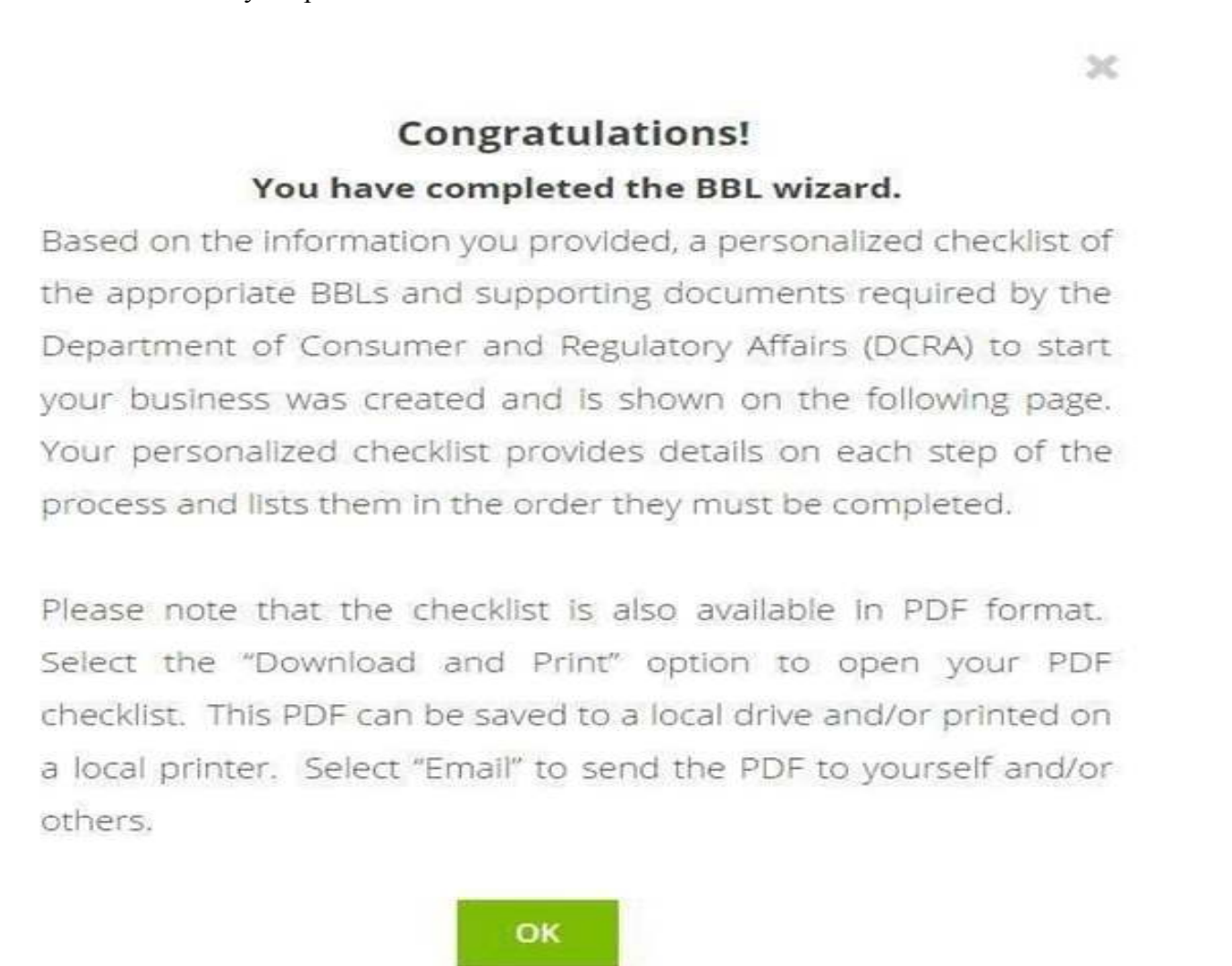
◀ Back Next ▶

Step 3: You can select the applicable answer options for questions related to “Corporate Structure” based on which the relevant checklist item is derived for “Corporate Structure” and displayed.



The screenshot shows a wizard interface for "Step 3: Corporate Structure". On the left is a logo with the text "WE ARE WASHINGTON DC" inside a stylized gear-like shape. The main text reads "Step 3: Corporate Structure" followed by "Tell us how your business is organized (i.e., Sole Proprietorship, LLC, Corporation, etc.).". Below this, it says "For this section you may need" and "Organizational Documents". At the bottom left is a "Back" button and at the bottom right is a "Next" button.

Step 4. You will be presented with wizard completion message per below screenshot. Click on the icon button to view your personalized checklist information.



The screenshot shows a completion message with a close button (X) in the top right corner. The text reads: "Congratulations! You have completed the BBL wizard. Based on the information you provided, a personalized checklist of the appropriate BBLs and supporting documents required by the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) to start your business was created and is shown on the following page. Your personalized checklist provides details on each step of the process and lists them in the order they must be completed. Please note that the checklist is also available in PDF format. Select the “Download and Print” option to open your PDF checklist. This PDF can be saved to a local drive and/or printed on a local printer. Select “Email” to send the PDF to yourself and/or others." At the bottom center is a green "OK" button.

Steps for the Detailed Wizard:

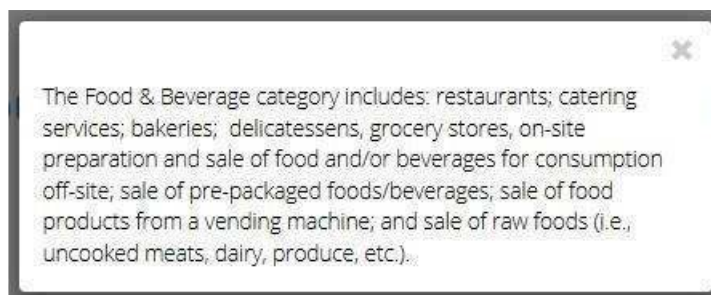
2. Entering Business Activities

Will you be doing any of the following activities?

- ☐ Beauty & Health ?
- ☐ Charitable Services ?
- ☐ Employment Services ?
- ☐ Entertainment & Recreation ?
- ☒ Food & Beverage ?
- ☐ Funeral Services ?
- ☐ Gasoline, Solid Waste & Hazardous Materials ?
- ☐ Home Improvement and Security ?
- ☐ Laundry Services ?
- ☐ Motorized Vehicles, Parking and Towing ?
- ☐ Moving & Storage ?
- ☐ Real Estate & Rentals ?
- ☐ Retail Sales, Consulting, and Other Services ?
- ☐ Used Goods Dealing & Sales ?

Pages with check boxes allow you to select one or more items from a list. In this example, a user is selecting the business category “Food & Beverage”.

The ? icon provides an overall definition of the associated business activity. This may prove helpful in choosing the appropriate category or categories for your business. For example, selecting icon next to the “Food & Beverage” category will display the following information:



To exit this information box, click on the X in the upper right hand corner or simply click somewhere else on the page outside of the box.

3. Enter Business Characteristics

For each business activity selected from the previous list, you must choose one or more business characteristics that apply to your business. Continuing our example, Smith Family Restaurant would fall in the “Food Sales” characteristic.



Please Pick Your Business Characteristics

Food & Beverage

☐ Catering

☒ Food Sales

4. Answering Questions



Are you going to bake and sell baked goods (i.e., bread, cakes, cookies, etc.)?

[? Help](#)

☐ Yes ☒ No

For example, while answering questions about Smith Family Restaurant, you are asked the question “Are you going to sell food products from a vending machine?” Your answer to this question may require you to obtain another business license in addition to a restaurant license.



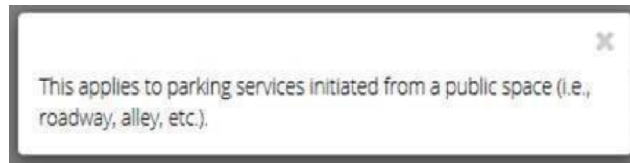
Are you going to sell food products from a vending machine?

[? Help](#)

☐ Yes ☒ No

Question Help

As you move through the wizard, you will see the  Help icon below each question. Click this icon to display context sensitive help related to the question.



To exit this help message, click on the X in the upper right hand corner or simply click somewhere else on the page outside of the box.

5. Corporate Structure

You provide information of your business and how it is incorporated that will help the wizard provide you with the correct checklist item for “Corporation Structure” type required for your business activity.



Select the answers via radio button options presented for questions related to “Corporate Structure” per below screenshots. You will be able to perform a single select for pages with radio buttons options based on which a checklist item is derived.

Do you currently have a company that you use to do business?

 Help

☐ Yes ☒ No

[< Back](#)

[Next >](#)

Please select type for creation of a new business entity within
DC

 Help

- ☐ For Profit Corporation
- ☐ General Cooperative Association
- ☐ Limited Cooperative Association
- ☐ Non Profit Corporation
- ☐ Professional For Profit Corporation
- ☐ Professional Limited Liability Company
- ☐ Statutory Trust
- ☐ Limited Liability Company
- ☐ Limited Liability Partnership
- ☐ Limited Partnership
- ☒ None of the above

Do you plan to operate your business under a Trade Name?


 Help

☒ Yes ☐ No

[< Back](#)

[Next >](#)

6. Reviewing Questions/Answers

As you progress through the wizard, you will see the  icon on the page.



Start a Business Wizard : Smith Family Restaurant


Your Wizard ID: 24376546



Click this icon to review the questions and answers you have provided thus far as you move through the wizard. This information may be downloaded as a PDF document for printing or storage on your local computer. You can also email the information to any valid email address

Wizard Review





 Download & Print 

 Email


Step 1: Business Activity

Business Activities : Real Estate & Rentals		Re-Visit
Business Characteristics : Real Estate & Rentals		
Are you going to operate an Inn or motel?	Answer: Yes	Re-Visit
Food Vending Machine	Answer: Yes	Re-Visit
Restaurant	Answer: Yes	Re-Visit


Step 2: Physical Location

 [Download & Print](#)  To download, view, and print these questions/answers, you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader. If this software is not already loaded on your device, click the  icon for information on how to obtain this free Reader. You can also email the information to any valid email address by clicking on the icon.  [Email](#)

To exit this review, click on the X in the upper right hand corner or simply click somewhere else on the page outside of the box.

If you want to re-visit a particular question, perhaps to change your answer, just click on the  icon. This will reposition the wizard to the selected question. This feature allows you to “jump” from question to question throughout the wizard.

Sample PDF version of questions and answers:

	Business Name: <i>Smith Family Restaurant</i>
	Wizard ID: 25482933
	http://www.business.dc.gov

Step 1: Business Activity	
Selected Business Activities	
Food & Beverage Motorized Vehicles, Parking and Towing	
Selected Business Characteristics	
Food & Beverage Food Sales Motorized Vehicles, Parking and Towing Auto Parking	
Questions:	Answers:
Are you going to bake and sell baked goods (i.e., bread, cakes, cookies, etc.)?	No
Are you going to prepare food and/or beverages for sale via drive-thru, takeout or carryout?	No
Are you going to sell pre-packaged foods/beverages?	No
Are you going to sell food products from a vending machine?	No
Are you going to sell raw foods (i.e., uncooked meats, dairy, fruits, vegetables, etc.)?	No
Are you going to operate a restaurant?	Yes
Are you going to operate a parking establishment?	Yes
Are you an individual who will park/supervise parking on behalf of a licensed parking facility?	No
Are you going to operate a valet parking business?	Yes
Step 2: Physical Location	
You must have a DC commercial location for this business	
Step 3: Business Structure	
What is the current status of the company?	No Existing Company
Step 4: Tax and Revenue	
Does your business owe more than \$100 to the DC Government?	No

DISCLAIMER: The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) has used every effort to ensure that the information provided on this checklist is accurate and up to date. The information provided using this checklist is only intended to be general summary information to the public. It is not intended to take the place of either the written law or regulations. It shall not serve as the substitute for seeking legal advice from corporate attorney or certified public accountant.

Page 1 of 1

7. Personalized Checklist

Once you have completed all the questions asked by the wizard, you will be presented with a results page, showing your personalized checklist of items to be accomplished in the order as mentioned.

[Download & Print](#) [Email](#) [Expand All\(+\)](#)

1. Corporate Structure	Quick Start Guide	▼
2. Verify Clean Hands with OTR	Quick Start Guide	▼
3. Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy	Quick Start Guide	▼
4. Obtain an Inspection from the Department of Health (DOH)	Quick Start Guide	▼
5. Contact the Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA)	Quick Start Guide	▼
6. Get a Basic Business License(s)	Quick Start Guide	▼
7. Weights and Measures	Quick Start Guide	▼

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To close the “expanded” view of a step, click on the ▲ icon.

To expand all items on your check list, click on the “Expand All” link. To Collapse all items, click on the link “Collapse All”

6. Weights and Measures

 Quick Start Guide



One or more of the basic business licenses you selected may require usage of weighing and measuring devices regulated by DCRA's Division of Weights and Measures. If so, you must register those devices and schedule an inspection.

Below is a list of regulated devices frequently used by other District companies with your business focus:

Inn and Motel :

UPC Scanners : Product label bar code scanner for price and inventory retail transactions.

To ensure that you are in full compliance with DC regulations, if your business activity is located within DC be sure to inform the Weights and Measures Division of all the devices you plan to use. Failure to register a weighing or measuring device could result in a fine or interruption to your business activity. These devices must be inspected before they are used.

To see a complete list of regulated weights and measures devices or to register a device, go to:

<http://dcra.dc.gov/service/register-devices-weights-and-measures>

or call our office:

The Division of Weights and Measures
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
1100 4th Street SW, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20024
(202) 698-2130

1. Corporate Structure

 Quick Start Guide



2. Verify Clean Hands with OTR

 Quick Start Guide



Ensure that your business has "Clean Hands"

To ensure that your accounts receivable and tax returns with the District Government are up-to-date, visit the Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) and request a Certificate of Clean Hands or request the form online (<http://dcforms.dc.gov/webform/certificate-clean-hands-formerly-certificate-good-standing>).

Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR)

 1101 4th Street, SW, Suite 270 West Washington, DC 20024


 (202) 727-4829


 <http://otr.cfo.dc.gov/page/clean-hands>

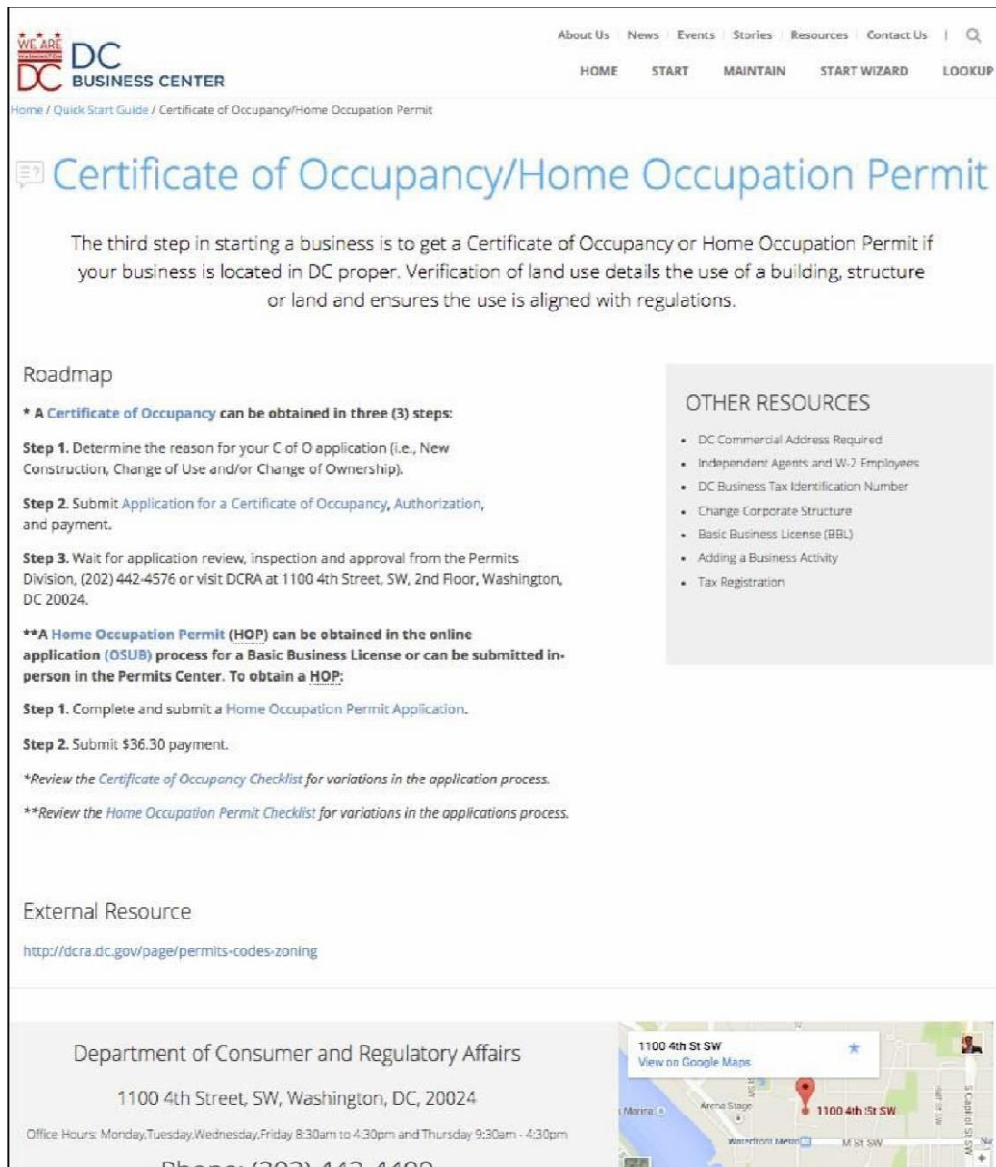


The “expanded” view will provide specific information related to this step in the process of setting up your business. The information includes the street address (with map), phone number, and web address of the applicable agency involved.


Weights and Measures devices registration is mandatory for all BBLs.

You can also email the checklist to any valid email address by clicking on the  Email icon. Sample PDF version of personalized checklist:

A Quick Start Guide, associated with each step, provides additional detail. Select the  Quick Start Guide icon to see the guide. An example is shown below:



The screenshot shows the DC Business Center website. The header includes the DC Business Center logo and navigation links: About Us, News, Events, Stories, Resources, Contact Us, and a search icon. Below the header is a secondary navigation bar with links: HOME, START, MAINTAIN, START WIZARD, and LOOKUP. The main content area is titled "Certificate of Occupancy/Home Occupation Permit" and includes a brief explanation of the permit. It also features a "Roadmap" section with three steps for obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy and a section for a Home Occupation Permit (HOP). An "External Resource" link is provided. On the right side, there is a "OTHER RESOURCES" section with a list of links. At the bottom, there is contact information for the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, including the address, office hours, and phone number, along with a map showing the location at 1100 4th St SW.

Use the back arrow  of your internet browser to return to the wizard results page.

Your personalized checklist may be downloaded as a PDF document for printing or storage on your local computer by clicking on the  Download & Print icon.

The following checklist items must be accomplished in the order they are listed.

Selected Business Activities

Food & Beverage
Motorized Vehicles, Parking and Towing

Selected Business Characteristics

Food & Beverage
Food Sales
Motorized Vehicles, Parking and Towing
Auto Parking

☐ 1. Create a Business Structure

☐ Form a Business in the District

DCRA - Corporations Division - *Division of Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)*

📍 1100 4th Street SW, Washington DC 20024

☎ (202) 442-4400

🌐 <http://dcra.dc.gov/service/corporate-registration>

Contact the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs' (DCRA) Corporate Division to establish your new business structure. DCRA is ready to help you form your new Corporation, LLC, Limited Liability Partnership, or other business type either in person or online.

☐ 2. Register Your Business with the Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR)

☐ Complete Form FR-500

Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) - *Division of Office of Tax and Revenue*

📍 1101 4th Street, SW, Suite 270 West Washington, DC 20024

☎ (202) 727-4829

🌐 <http://otr.cfo.dc.gov/>

Complete Form FR-500 at the Office of Tax and Revenue or on their website (<https://www.taxpayerservicecenter.com/fr500/>). Not-For-Profit businesses must also complete form FR-164. This paperwork must accompany your application for a Basic Business License (BBL) at DCRA.

☐ 3. Verify Clean Hands with OTR

☐ Ensure That Your Business Has "Clean Hands"

Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) - *Division of Office of Tax and Revenue*

📍 1101 4th Street, SW, Suite 270 West Washington, DC 20024

☎ (202) 727-4829


🌐 <http://otr.cfo.dc.gov/page/clean-hands>

To ensure that your accounts receivable and tax returns with the District Government are up-to-date, visit the Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) and request a Certificate of Clean Hands or request the form online (<http://dcforms.dc.gov/webform/certificate-clean-hands-formerly-certificate-good-standing>).

☐ 4. Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy

8. Returning to a Previously Started Wizard

Once you have completed your wizard – or if you left the wizard without completing all the questions – you may return at any time.



The banner features a dark blue background. On the left is a white icon of a clipboard with a checklist and a pencil. To the right of the icon, the text reads: "Use our wizard to receive a personalized checklist of what is needed to get your business started in DC." Below this, in smaller text, it says: "The wizard will take approximately 30 minutes and can be saved and restarted at any time." At the bottom, there are three green buttons with white text: "START WIZARD", "CONTINUE WIZARD", and "HOW TO USE THIS WIZARD".

To review or complete a wizard click the  icon on the Start page and you will be prompted to enter your personal Wizard ID number.



The form is a white rectangular box with a thin black border. At the top, it says "Enter your Wizard ID:" followed by a small "X" icon. Below this is a text input field containing the number "25482933". At the bottom center of the box is a green button with the word "CONTINUE" in white capital letters.

Enter your number and click the  icon to resume the wizard.